



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

A reaction however has set in. And if Keller was somewhat overrated, he is now beginning to be unduly neglected. This passing wave of popularity has nevertheless, as a fortunate result, brought forward several excellent critical essays on the Zurich novelist. Among them, Bächtold's edition of his letters and diaries stands first and still now contains almost all the literary material needed for the study of Keller's life and writings.

The present volume is a thesis offered in partial fulfillment of the requirements of a doctor's degree at the Sorbonne. It is intended for a public that probably first heard of Keller, when at the time of his death the newspapers mentioned his name. Baldensperger, therefore, not only gives a history of Keller's life and of the origins and sources of his writings, but he gives also a complete and sympathetic argument of all his novels; yet as he says himself (p. III): "une analyse est un commencement de commentaire." Thus in the first part of the volume he prepares the reader for the systematic analysis of Keller's literary character, which occupies the six chapters of the "deuxième partie." These chapters are devoted to an exhaustive discussion of Keller's "helvétisme," his "romantisme," his "sens de la vue," his "humeur," and his "style et langue;" to them is added a final chapter "conclusions" in which the results of this analysis are summed up. This part of the volume is obviously the most important one; it contains practically everything that could be said about Keller's literary personality and it is mostly well said. It seems, however, somewhat exaggerated if Baldensperger says (p. 466) "La phrase de Keller est considérée par les meilleurs juges comme un modèle de prose allemande," and "Ses phrases, souvent fort longues et composées de propositions nombreuses et dépendantes, ne donnent presque jamais l'impression d'enchevêtrement que produit si souvent la prose allemande." No doubt Keller's vocabulary was practically unlimited and he always knew how to find the most expressive term. But he was drawing his words from all possible sources and his taste was sometimes more than catholic. The words he uses, his metaphors and the scenes he describes are sometimes deplorably coarse, and passages like the one on page 91 of vol. I of the *Leute von Seldwyla*<sup>1</sup> are unfortu-

nately no isolated exceptions. And the beauty of his narrative is often seriously marred by sentences of the following kind: "Beide aber trafen zusammen in der Überzeugung, dass der andere, den anderen so frech und plump übervorteilend, ihn notwendig für einen verächtlichen Dummkopf halten müsse, da man dergleichen etwa einem armen haltlosen Teufel, nicht aber einem aufrechten, klugen und wehrhaften Manne gegenüber sich erlauben könne, und jeder sah sich in seiner wunderlichen Ehre gekränkt und gab sich rückhaltlos der Leidenschaft des Streites und dem daraus erfolgendem Verfall hin, und ihr Leben glich fortan der träumerischen Qual zweier Verdammten, welche auf einem schmalen Brette einen dunklen Strom hinabtreibend sich befahlen, in die Luft hauen und sich selber anpacken und vernichten, in der Meinung, sie hätten ihr Unglück gefasst;" or: "Denn das Fleckchen Erde mit dem Steinhäufen darüber, auf welchem bereits wieder ein Wald von Nesseln und Disteln blühte, war nur noch der erste Keim oder der Grundstein einer verworrenen Geschichte und Lebensweise, in welcher die zwei Funfzigjährigen noch neue Gewohnheiten und Sitten, Grundsätze und Hoffnungen annahmen, als sie bisher geübt." <sup>2</sup> To call such passages models of German prose is to do injustice to authors like Heine, Nietzsche, Hartleben or others, with whom the writing of artistic German has never been a lost art.

Otherwise, Baldensperger's analysis is entirely plausible, and the whole book is a most creditable specimen of the kind of criticism of German literature which is now being practised at the best French universities.

ALBERT HAAS.

*Bryn Mawr College.*

## SCANDINAVIAN POPULAR SONGS.

*Les Vieux Chants Populaires Scandinaves* (Gamle Nordiske Folkeviser) par LÉON PINEAU. ii. Epoque Barbare. Paris: 1901. 8vo., 584 pp.

The author has made a diligent study of the folklore, not only of the Scandinavians, but of

<sup>2</sup> *Die Leute von Seldwyla*. Berlin, 1887, vol. I, pp. 80 and 81.

<sup>1</sup> 5te Auflage. Berlin, 1887.

other peoples as well. In a preceding volume he has presented an interesting study of the Songs of Magic; in the volume now before us he takes up the songs of the barbarian epoch, grouping his material under three great divisions: The divine legend, the heroic legend, and diverse songs.

In the songs belonging to the first division, traces of the old Scandinavian mythology are still encountered. The gods still figure prominently in many of these songs, though sometimes in the disguise of Christian saints. No god, however, is so popular as Thór. He is the hero of one of the very finest as well as most ancient of folksongs, the famous "Thór af Havsgaard," the theme of which is familiar from the *Þrymskviða*. The author argues for the independent development of folksong and Eddic poem from a common source, and, we may say, that this is characteristic of his point of view throughout the book. To prove his case, he relies on internal evidence, which of necessity gives free scope to subjective opinion, and is, therefore, rarely convincing, unless supported by data resting on a more certain basis.

In the chapter devoted to a discussion of the Edda the difficult question of the origin of the Aesir and Vanir is touched on. The author attributes to the latter a pre-Germanic, possibly Celtic origin, and tries to prove that Thór was originally of the Vanir race. This is not the view held by the best Germanic scholars of the present day. The well-attested worship of Nerthus, a Vanir-deity, by Ingvæonic tribes, the identification of Freyr, another Vanir-deity, with the legendary progenitor Ingvo, as well as his mention in the Anglo-Saxon genealogical tables, all contribute to make the theory of the non-Germanic origin of the Vanir untenable. Thór is anterior to them; in Norway, at least, his worship is indigenous. When Odinism was introduced later on, it came into conflict both with the cult of Thór as well as that of the Vanir.

There is plainly noticeable throughout the book a tendency to discover fundamental resemblance in the case of songs of apparently different content. This tendency is justifiable enough if confined within reasonable limits; but, in our opinion, the author goes too far, when he asserts the fundamental identity of Young Svejdal and Svend

Vonved. The adventures related of the two heroes are not at all similar. We confess that we fail to detect a striking resemblance between the theme of the Svend Vonved song and the Lesbian story, which is used as a third term of comparison. We also fail to see a reason why we should suppose that the winning of a maiden by a predestined lover constituted the main motif of the song in its original form, unless it be the desire to find a parallel to the song of Svejdal.

Nor do we see any reason for assigning a mythical basis to the mediæval "Klosterrovisor." The events related in these poems—the liberation of a maiden imprisoned in a convent—happened frequently enough in mediæval times. This the author himself admits. Then why believe that such songs could not have arisen independently of any mythical basis?

In the second part of the book the author takes up the heroic legend and approaches the difficult subject from the standpoint of the folksong. The first legend to claim our attention is that of Siegfried. M. Pineau unhesitatingly assumes that the folksongs are independent of, and in many respects more primitive than, the tradition of the Eddas or Thidreksaga. As he bases his discussion of the legend on this assumption, one should think that the truth of it should be established beyond all possibility of doubt, all the more because it conflicts with the view held by some of the best Germanic scholars, notably Wolfgang Golther. In our opinion, the author utterly fails to refute Golther's arguments. In fact, no attempt is made to refute them beyond a declaration that the strophes in the Faroese poem telling of Asla's birth are spurious and a later addition. Strophes bearing an undeniable Christian stamp (*e. g.*, *Regin smiður*, 25, 26) are likewise rejected as not genuine. The presence of the strophes telling of Sigurð's change of form with Gunnar (*Brinild*, 223, 224)—on which Golther bases one of his principal arguments—is completely ignored; the author even tells us that the folksongs had no knowledge whatever of this interchange of form (p. 243). On the other hand, instances are adduced where, in the author's opinion, the songs have preserved more primitive traits than are

found in Eddic tradition. But, unfortunately, the primitiveness of these traits is a matter of subjective opinion and of doubtful value as evidence.

M. Pineau's views on the origin of the legend are decidedly original and opposed to those commonly held by scholars. According to him, only the second part, the legend of the destruction of the Nibelungs, is of German origin. The first part, however, the Siegfried saga proper, developed in the Scandinavian North independently of German tradition. To account for the explicit references in the Edda poems and the *Volsungasaga* to German localities, the Rhine and Frankland, the author advances the theory that, the second part having been carried to the North by German singers and being unmistakably German in its local coloring, the Eddic poets, in order to harmonize the first part with the second, "Germanized" the whole. The theory is improbable in itself and nothing but the most convincing proofs could ever make us accept it. But no such proofs are given. The fact that in the Faroese songs the real myth, the original part, contains no references to German locality, proves nothing, for neither does the second part, which is admittedly of German origin, contain such references. Nor is anything settled by the fact that the legend was known among the Scandinavians anterior to the tenth century, for, if it assumed shape during, or shortly after, the period of migrations, it could very well have come North by that time. That the story of Balder and Hother in Saxo is a reappearance in euhemeristic form of the *Sigurð*-myth is a mere assertion. The stories are not even very similar. The argument based on the presence of the Sigemund-episode in the *Beowulf* epic is not conclusive, because it takes for granted that the legends contained in that poem had been fully developed among the Scandinavians and been made by them the subject of song, which is not at all certain, nor even probable. As for the identification of the name Wälse with that of the Slavic divinity Volos, it is a mere conjecture. And so the assertion that the Scandinavians had not received the Siegfried saga from the Germans, or vice versa, remains an assertion unsupported by convincing evidence and at variance with the generally accepted view.

In his discussion of the interpretation of the legend, the author shows himself a pronounced adherent of the mythological school. The identifications of the dragon with the "vafrogi," of Brynhild with the treasure, of the "Glasberg" in the Danish song with the Gnitahæath are accepted as incontestable. Elaborate parallels are presented between Siegfried on the one hand, and Apollo, Jason, Perseus, Achilles, Rustam and Krishna on the other. These parallels are certainly ingenious, but to us they are not really convincing. For, though there are undoubted resemblances, there are at least as many, if not more, undoubted differences. By emphasizing the former and ignoring the latter, it is no doubt possible to establish parallels more or less satisfactory. But the mythical formula that may be deduced therefrom is so perfectly general and so absolutely colorless as to be devoid of all character, and, consequently, of all human interest. Even in Indo-Germanic times people possessed fully developed legends and stories, and what legend could be more commonplace than that of a hero overcoming some mighty monster? Such a story, however, probably bore no greater resemblance to that of Siegfried, or any other of the above-mentioned heroes, than to that of David and Goliath.

The author closes his discussion of the Siegfried saga by tracing the fortunes of the hero and his offspring and descendants in later folkpoetry. He finds, moreover, echoes of the legend in many songs that at first glance seem to have little similarity to it. Such are, for instance, the songs about Jon Rand and Peder Riboldsøn. Possibly this may be so. But when the author also detects such echoes in the songs of Svend Feld and Hjelmer Kamp, we think he is going too far. We cannot bring ourselves to believe that every dwarf, troll, giant, rival, or plain villain, that stands in the way of a lady's happiness and freedom and perishes at the hands of a valiant knight must be a variant of Fafnir. We believe that in arriving at such a conclusion, imagination has had a larger share than sober judgment.

The second subdivision in the discussion of the heroic legend is devoted to the famous Dietrich of Bern. It is conceded at the outset that this leg-

end, while of East-Gothic origin, is of essentially German development. But Scandinavian tradition represents the hero very differently from German tradition and knows, moreover, of many events concerning which German tradition is silent. Hence the author rejects the opinion most generally held, according to which the folksongs, as well as the Thidreksaga, are based on older Low German songs, and propounds a theory similar to that which he advanced for the Siegfried legend. According to him, the material of the Diderik songs is essentially and primitively Scandinavian and existed long before the Thidreksaga was composed. But German poetry being the fashion in the North, the Scandinavian poets "Germanized" their native material. The author lays great stress on the passage in the preface to the Thidreksaga where we are told that Danes and Swedes had many such old sagas as those that make up the Thidreksaga, and also many songs "*er fyrri löngu voru ort eptir þessari sögu*" (p. 362, note). "Ce passage établit nettement l'existence d'une tradition nordique parallèlement à la tradition allemande." Undoubtedly; but this does not argue against the German origin of these songs. The Thidreksaga was written in the thirteenth century, and the Dietrich legend arose as early as the sixth century. That the latter was well known in the North by the ninth century and had already received poetic treatment is attested by the runic inscription on the Rökstone. Such songs were known to the writer of the Preface to the Thidreksaga, and no wonder he should think they were composed a long time ago. The material probably came North in the sixth century, or shortly after, and then took place the parallel development of which the author speaks. M. Pineau thinks that the heroes of the Diderik songs are purely Scandinavian and owe their German names to German influence; as proof of this, he suggests that the real hero and chief figure of the song "Diderik ok hans Kæmper" is not Diderik but Viderik, son of Verland. But he does not seem to be aware of the fact that this Viderik Verlandson is the German Witege or Wittich, the Anglo-Saxon Wadga, son of Wēlent the smith, and, therefore, originally no more of a Scandinavian hero than Diderik. The whole legend, as it appears in the

Scandinavian songs, is claimed by the author to be of pre-Germanic origin and of mythical character. For Bertingsland is Bretagne, and Bretagne, we are told, is the realm of the dead. Lastly, the supernatural birth and disappearance of the hero are cited as arguments for his mythical origin. But these supposedly mythical traits admit of a perfectly simple explanation. They were introduced under ecclesiastical influence and are expressive of the hatred which the orthodox Christians entertained for the heretical Theodoric. They are, therefore, neither mythical nor primitive. (See Jiriczek, *Deutsche Heldensage*, Strassb., 1898, p. 269.)

For the songs which treat of Diderik's heroes, such as "Den skallede Munk," "Ulf van Jaern," the author likewise claims a Scandinavian origin. Also for "Memering and Ravnli," a story of slandered innocence vindicated. But again we ask, why should German names appear in a song of Danish origin and content? In one variant Henrik is duke of Brunswick; in another, his bride is Gunder of Spire, i. e., Speyer. The theme of the song, M. Pineau tells us, is common to all Germanic peoples and has spread widely over Germanic territory. It appears even in the North under another form in the Eddic lay entitled *Goprunarkvæða* iii. But, we must remark, this song is of late origin and exhibits German influence. The ordeal of the boiling kettle did not come North until the eleventh century; in the poem it is Saxi, king of the Southmen, who knows how to consecrate the kettle. It seems to us that, wherever we look, traces of the German origin of the material constituting the Diderik-cycle are clearly discernible. Decidedly we cannot agree with the author when he declares (p. 382) that German influence on this cycle "est, en somme, aussi minime que possible." On the contrary, we believe, that but for this influence the songs of the Scandinavian Diderik-cycle would never have taken shape.

The third part of the book is devoted to a consideration of diverse songs. Among the many interesting themes to be met with here is also that of Walther and Hildegund. The author rejects, and we fully agree with him, the fanciful mytho-

logical and historic interpretations of the legend attempted by Scherer, Müllenhoff and Müller. Nor does he accept, and again we think he is right, Andler's theory of the Irish origin. The theme was common to all Germanic tribes. That it was well-known in Scandinavia is attested by the fine Swedish song of King Vallemo, to take but one example.

Finally, we have a discussion of the famous legend that inspired the song of Hagbard and Signe. The author does not believe Saxo's statement that the story is historically true; he thinks that the historian used oral tradition, songs existing at his time. Such a song is the one which we have before us. M. Pineau opposes the opinion of those who believe that the chronicle inspired the song. He points out that all the variants of the song, while similar in development, exhibit in their details considerable divergence from the chronicle. To him the version of the song seems much more simple and logical than that of Saxo. But if the original draft of the story was what he makes it out to be on the evidence of ancient Germanic law, then it certainly was far inferior in poetic quality, not only to the song as we now know it, but also to Saxo's account. We should remark, moreover, that it is not the nature of folkpoetry to be painstakingly accurate and consistent in detail. Nor does it concern itself scrupulously with strict logic. Arguments based on considerations of this kind are not convincing.

When it comes to interpreting the legend, we find ourselves utterly unable to accept the author's views. To him the main feature of the legend is the fact that the hero disguises himself to get near his beloved. Now all the legends, Greek, Germanic, Celtic, where such a disguise is the main motif, are identified and the motif is then submitted to a careful scrutiny with a view of arriving at its correct interpretation. The feminine disguise of a hero is found to have been primitively a metamorphosis, such as that of Zeus into a serpent, bull, swan or eagle. All disguises are mythic in origin. According to the mythologists, it would never occur to a man to put on a disguise in order to accomplish a desired object. Every feature of the disguise, moreover, admits of interpretation. Mr. Wolfskehl is sure that the long

hair of the disguised warrior symbolizes the storm-cloud pregnant with lightning. M. Pineau is positive it is symbolical of the rays of the sun. Hagbard is a solar hero. But more than that. He is identical with Sigurð, for a Faroese song and a Swedish song attribute to one single personage the adventures of both Hagbard and Sigurð. This is true enough if we believe that every story of a woman who can be won with difficulty, but is finally won by a predestined hero, is a variant of the Siegfried-Brynhild legend. But we do not believe that. Nor do we believe that every story telling of the surprise of a lover during a love-scene is necessarily a recast of the Hagbard-story. We do not see the slightest reason for giving a mythological significance to the legend of Hagbard and Signe. To us the story is perfectly human. All the efforts to interpret it mythologically involve arbitrary assumptions and lead to grotesque absurdities.

In conclusion, the author points out the reasons why the Scandinavians, though possessing abundant material, never succeeded in bringing all this scattered matter into one artistic whole, in a word, in creating an epic. The reasons for this are to be found chiefly in the Scandinavian character itself, but the climate and nature of the country are also important factors.

A word about the translations. It is at best a difficult task to translate poems from a Germanic into a Romance language. On the whole, M. Pineau has performed his task very acceptably. But his translations from the Edda contain several serious errors. Thus in his version of the *Skírnismol* (Str. 31) "*pik morn morne*" is translated (p. 158) "*du matin au matin*," whereas it probably means "*may sorrow consume thee*." In strophe B. 33 the words *en firenilla mæ, en fenget hefr gambanreiþe goþa* are certainly not correctly rendered by "*Fuis, misérable fille, avant que ne t'ait frappée la colère des dieux!*" The meaning is: "*Thou wicked maid, who (lit. since) hast drawn upon thyself the severe wrath of the gods!*" The words *erge ok oepe* (Str. 35) do not mean "*impotence, désespoir*" but "*lust and rage*." In strophe 8 [B. 43] of *Fáfnismöl* (ed. Jonsson, p. 42) the lines *Yggr stakk þorne*,

*apra felde horgefn hale, an hafa vilde* are completely mistranslated by "Yggr l'a piquée de l'épine : elle aimait mieux tuer les hommes, la vierge blonde, que les épouser" (p. 243). The translation ought to be : "Yggr stuck her with a thorn ; the maid felled other men than he would have."

Summing up, we must say that we are not in sympathy with the main tendencies of the book before us. We do not concur in the view that always regards tradition of the folksongs as a more primitive source than that of the written monuments. We find ourselves unable to accept the new theories propounded, and we differ decidedly as to the interpretation of the heroic legends. There is too much in the book that bears a purely hypothetical character. Nevertheless, we believe that, on the whole, the book is of decided merit. The completeness of its material as well as the charming manner in which the material is presented call for well nigh unstinted praise. Scandinavian scholars have every reason to welcome the author to a field into which French scholars have hitherto rarely ventured. We hope this is but the beginning. It can only be of advantage to Germanic studies if there is brought to them more of the elegance and taste for which the writers of France have ever been distinguished.

ARTHUR F. J. REMY.

Columbia University.

## FRENCH LITERATURE.

JOSEPH BÉDIER: *Études critiques*. Paris: Armand Colin, 1903, xi-295 pp.

In this book, M. Bédier, the editor of Thomas' *Tristan* and the successor of G. Paris in the late master's chair at the Collège de France, has collected five articles, all dealing with special questions of modern French literature and all having one point in common: "posant un problème d'histoire littéraire, [ils recourent] pour le résoudre, non aux opérations divinatoires du goût, mais aux ressources techniques de la philologie." M. Bédier thinks that the methods which care-

fully handled by skilful workers have brought about such wonderful results in the study of Classical and Mediæval literatures may be applied with the same accuracy and the same advantages to the study of modern French texts and authors. He would not have us believe that philology and antiquity are closely connected in some unaccountable manner; he cannot admit that what is legitimate, useful and necessary when you deal with the Middle Ages becomes at once a form of disguised and useless pedantry as you pass on to the sixteenth century; he points out that the field of modern research offers to us many problems similar to those raised by the study of the older literature. Why should they be left unsolved? If you try to solve them, why should you not use the same methods?

We have no reliable texts of some of the greatest French writers. In more than one instance, in the absence of an authoritative version left by the author, editors have established their text in a kind of haphazard way, often with no concern but to suit their own taste, trying at best to strike a happy mean between obvious extremes. Is it not surprising to learn that, in spite of three modern editions, we do not yet have a thoroughly reliable text of d'Aubigné's *Tragiques*? There was in the way of the editors a curious difficulty that had to be removed: none of the three has even attempted it. The result is that we have not the text in the form that d'Aubigné meant should be definitive, but in the form that seemed definitive to Lalanne, Read, and Réaume and Caussade: of course it would have been surprising if they had agreed on the determination of that particular form, and they have not. It may be that the critical edition for which M. Bédier wishes would not work very startling changes in the text of the *Tragiques*: it would work some, and that is enough. Think that it is not only a fiery satire on sixteenth century men and conditions: it is a beautiful epic, the only epic of any extent that we have in Modern French. Why should not this splendid poem receive at the hands of editors at least the same amount of care, respect and devotion that the humblest relic of Classical or Mediæval literature is sure to have? In his first paper ('Le texte des *Tragiques* d'Agrippa d'Aubigné') M.